DRAFT NORMS FOR ENHANCING CREDIBILITY IN THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR, IN INDIA

DECEMBER 2002

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This publication completes the first phase of the process.

Manual compiled by

The Credibility Alliance core group in consultation with workshop participants

Edited by

CHILDLINE India Foundation team and MCAS who also participated in drafting the Norms

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INTRODUCTION

We in the voluntary sector are following in the traditions of sages and religious leaders of all faiths. We draw inspiration from various thinkers – from Gautam Buddha to Mahatma Gandhi; from Karl Marx to Jayaprakash Narayan; from Mahatama Phule to Babasaheb Ambedkar. And we are fortunate to have amongst us many who are considered living legends of voluntary work; many who have been recognised nationally and internationally for their dedicated work; many scattered all over the country in remote corners; unheard and unrecognised, who have gained the hearts of the people with whom they worked with. Thousands of people are serving and working to set right the injustices and irregularities in our societies.

Despite this self-less work we are at some kind of crossroads were we are questioned and criticised. We are questioned about what we are doing and whether we really are making positive changes. We are questioned about how we use our financial resources and where we get our finances from. It is to help answer these questions that the "Credibility Alliance" has come together.

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PREFACE

The Credibility Alliance is a consortium of voluntary organisations and networks, which has come together to enhance good governance in the voluntary sector and further the sector's credibility in the eyes of the public. It will do this by setting Norms and Good Practices for governance and public disclosure. These Norms have evolved after studying past experiences; through discussions and meetings including two national workshops in February 2002 in Bangalore and July 2002 in Mumbai. In the process, the draft Norms have been circulated to over 15,000 organisations — the response received was positive. It is estimated that approximately 2,000 grass roots organisations, across the country, will be contacted (by August 2003) to share the Norms with them. The Alliance requests your suggestions to promote these Norms of good governance and to institutionalise mechanisms to promote them.

These Norms have already started a process of self-reflection and compliance for many of the organisations associated with the Alliance. It has also provoked several organisations to identify areas for capacity building to work towards complying with the Norms.

This booklet begins with some of the frequently asked questions about the Alliance and the process. It traces the genesis of this initiative and elaborates on the benefits of having an Alliance to promote the credibility of the voluntary sector. It includes the draft Norms that have been prepared by the Alliance. The document also suggests good practices for organisations to follow for annual reports, personnel policies and accounting procedures. The last section contains a questionnaire for your feedback based on which the way ahead will be determined. You are invited to be a member of the Alliance.

CREDIBILITY ALLIANCE : FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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This section answers some of the common questions about the Credibility Alliance, its activities and the way ahead.

In this document we use the term 'Voluntary Sector' - because the word 'voluntary' is a positive value, which relates to three very important characteristics of our sector:

1. Our Boards, the ultimate authority of our organisations, are predominantly served by volunteers - people who give of their skills and time.

2. Many organisations sustain their work with the help of volunteers; and many more could build increased volunteer support.

3. Voluntary donations of skills and finances are an increasing source of support to more and more organizations.

CREDIBILITY ALLIANCE : FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the Credibility Alliance?

It is a loose network of people with a concern to promote good governance and practices which will enhance the credibility of the voluntary sector.

2. How different is the Credibility Alliance from other networks and federations? Is it really necessary to have a new group?

Most existing networks are made up of single category interests such as disability; health; or human rights. No existing network has a special emphasis on this subject; and no existing network is in a position to promote this matter across all types of organisations and categories of voluntary sector activity. So far the strength of the Credibility Alliance has been that it is made up of very different categories of voluntary sector activity.

3. Why are we talking about enhancing the credibility of the voluntary sector?

The voluntary sector in India plays a vital role in society. Due to the substantial increase in numbers in recent years, doubts have been expressed on the credibility of certain organisations, which then can affect the credibility of the whole sector. The corporate sector derives its legitimacy from well-defined corporate law, regulatory bodies, and easily measurable "bottom line" goals. The Government is accountable to people through the democratic process. The voluntary sector is not organised and the regulatory mechanisms in place do not adequately provide us the opportunity to enhance our credibility. A self-regulatory

framework, built by us from WITHIN the sector that allows for the establishment of Norms, their promotion and adoption, and ultimitely certification that organisations meet these Norms, would strengthen and enhance the credibility of the voluntary sector. It would increase its transparency and accountability. It would also pre-empt the imposition of a framework from outside.

4. What do you mean by enhancement of credibility?

Credibility implies confidence amongst the public and community we serve that an organisation is working towards its objectives. While there are several ways to enhance the credibility of an organisation, this initiative of Credibility Alliance aims to enhance the credibility of the voluntary sector through promoting 'Norms' of good governance and by building capacities of organisations to comply. These Norms (elaborated in this booklet) pertain to an organisation's identity; vision/aims and objectives/ achievements; operations; governance; transparency and accountability. Compliance to the Norms is voluntary, because the underlying principle is one of self-regulation.

5. The voluntary sector is very large. Are you really dealing with the whole voluntary sector?

No. Credibility Alliance has focussed on organisations undertaking service and developmental activities for the marginalised sections of society. These organisations known as NGOs/ VOLAGs/ DEVORGs are registered under the Societies Registration Act, Indian Trust Act, the Bombay Public Trust Act or Section 25 of the Companies Act.

6. Who is taking this initiative to enhance credibility?

A group of organisations that had themselves initiated and evolved Norms for self-regulation, met in Delhi in December 2001

to share their experiences. At this meeting it was unanimously decided that the process would be inclusive and no single organisation would take the leadership. Hence, the financial, administrative and secretarial functions of the process would rotate annually. A working group was formed at this meeting to research Norms from other sectors and to prepare a first draft of Norms for the voluntary sector. A core group of organisations is currently anchoring the dissemination process. All organisations are invited to be part of this initiative. The current list of organisations, involved in the process, is found on the back page.

7. Why the name Credibility Alliance?

When the group first met on 17th December 2001, in Delhi, to discuss this issue, the name suggested was "Working Group for Enhancing Credibility of the Voluntary Sector". Credibility was used to ensure that the name, in itself, communicated the objective of the group, that is, to make a positive statement about the sectors credibility . Alliance was the term used to define an unstructured network of interested organisations. The term also aimed to communicate the inclusiveness of the process.

8. Does this process have any guiding principles?

Yes it does. These guiding principles have been evolved by the organisations associated with the Alliance. These are outlined below:

- This Alliance is not headed by any single individual or organisation - it is an Alliance of organisations concerned with the issue of enhancing the credibility of the voluntary sector in India, hence it has a rotating office and many organisations are involved in the process. In the first

phase CIF held the office for general facilitation purposes including finance and administration. Subsequently it was decided that VANI would be housing the office. It is hoped that an organisation from the East or South would hold office subsequently. All the organisations/institutes who were part of the process have been mentioned at the back of this document.

- The process of setting the Norms for enhancing credibility of the voluntary sector is being initiated and led by the sector itself.

- The Norms are intended to be such that the range of organisations from small to large and local to international, working in India, are able to comply.

- Compliance to the Norms is voluntary, because the underlying principle is one of self-regulation. The Norms will not be imposed on any organisation in the Alliance.

- The promotion and modification of the Norms will continue to evolve in a participatory manner.

- Accreditation/ evaluation/ rating against these Norms is to be a separate process by agencies other than the Credibility Alliance.

- The Norms emphasise disclosure, in keeping with the principles of transparency and accountability, rather than for value judgement.

- By coming together in this way, the voluntary sector will be able to influence policy and decision-making at state, national and international levels and with other fora outside the voluntary sector.

9. Is the process donor driven?

The driving force for this initiative has emerged from within the sector itself, amongst grassroot organisations and networks. While there are donors also involved in the process, and are supporting the process financially, it is not being led by 'donors'. As mentioned earlier, it has a rotating office and many voluntary organisations are involved in the process.

10. Will the Credibility Alliance continue indefinitely?

The future of the Alliance is not yet determined. It could continue as an informal network or as a registered body.

11. How can Norms be changed?

Based on local and regional consultations and consensus arrived at the all-India co-ordination level, changes will be made.

12. How and when will the decision be taken?

The consultative process, involving the dissemination of these Norms in regional languages as well as consultative meetings in different parts of the country, will take place in March-July 2003. it is planned that 2000 organisations will be approached/consulted during the process. In August 2003, a national meeting will be held in Kolkata to decide if the process should continue. If it is decided to continue the process, the plan of action and structure will be determined based on the feedback received from you and others involved.

13. If a decision is taken to have a formal registered body, what will it do?

The role of this body will be determined based on the feedback received. Should the decision be taken to register it

formally, some of the functions of this body, that have emerged from the consultative process so far, are:

- ❑ Consensus and membership building
- ❑ Development and continual improvement of Norms
- ❑ Accreditation of rating / certification agencies and capacity building organisations
- ❑ Information and communication support for enhancement of credibility
- ❑ Policy advocacy for enhancement of credibility
- ❑ Grievance reddressal

14. If the decision is taken to have a formal registered body, how will it be structured?

As stated in the earlier question, the structure has not yet been determined and will depend on the feedback received thorugh the consultative process.

From the deliberations so far, it is visualised that the body could be a membership body with a vast membership base. Membership to this body would be:

- ❑ Organisations who are accredited as conforming to the Norms
- ❑ Organisations who commit to conform to the Norms within one financial year (associate members).

It has been suggested that membership fee to the Alliance vary with the size of the organisation.

15. How will my credibility be asssessed by this body?

Credibility compliance would be assessed against the Norms which have evolved through the consultative process by a 'competent authority'.

16. Who would be this 'competent authority'?

No organisation has yet been identified or certified. But it is likely that they will emerge. The competent authorities could be called an accrediting agency. These organisations will themselves have complied with all the Norms and suggested good practices.

17. How much will this assessment cost?

We do not know yet. However there will be charges. They will be variable depending on travel costs and the size of the organisation. The amount to be charged will take into account feedback received from voluntary organisations and potential accreditation agencies.

18. How do I know that Credibility Alliance is credible?

Currently the Working Group is open to all interested organisations. However, if the process continues, then only organisations, that have confirmed their committment to comply with the Norms by August 2003, will form part of the Working Group.

19. What are the benefits of joining the process?

The benifts of joining the process include:

- **Sense of belonging** Participation will include attaining an identity as being part of a larger collective / network / alliance; sharing experiences to build up the credibility

of the sector as a whole and becoming part of a broader social network and support system.

- **Membership** Membership will include recognition as being committed to a set of Norms; conferring a status that it is efficient, effective and reliable.

- **Capacity building support** Membership will enable the organisation to have access to capacity building support, according to your needs.

- **Likelihood of financial and other forms of support** Improved and recognised standards of governance and public disclosure are likely to generate increased financial support for your organisation. Donors (both institutional and individual) are more likely to consider applications and appeals from organisations which comply with the Norms.

- **Access to information** A member will have access to information on opportunities available to members including use of electronic information systems between members.

- **Access to policy and decision making platforms** A member will have the opportunity to contribute to policy formulation on issues that affect its work. The organisation will also have opportunities to influence policies and procedures of grant-making agencies.

PROCESS

PROCESS

This section traces the genesis of the Credibilty Alliance, the process of drafting the Norms and the activities undertaken so far to build consensus on the Norms. It also includes the plan to reach out to a regionally and sectorally diverse set of organisations across the voluntary sector throughout India.

BACKGROUND PROCESS

GENESIS

December 2001

- Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) and CHILDLINE India Foundation (CIF) co-host a meeting on "Need for an NGO Consultative Framework".
- Participation from a cross-section of organisations working on criteria, rating and evalutation. These included CAF, CIF (Mumbai), CRISIL, Donor Agency Network (Bangalore), GIVE Foundation (Ahmedabad), Indian NGOS.com (Mumbai), MCAS and Mahiti (Bangalore), MCRIL (Delhi), SOSVA (Mumbai).
- Agreement on need to enhance credibility reached and to draft : 'minimum' Norms for governance and disclosure of the voluntary sector.
- Formation of Working Group.
- Agreement on the process being inclusive and no single organisation taking the leadership. Concenses on financial, administrative and secretarial functions rotating periodically.

NORMS OF DRAFTING PROCESS

January 2002

- Comparative analysis of existing rating parameters developed by organisations such as CAF, CIF, CRISIL, GIVE, IndianNGOS.com, MCAS, MCRIL, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, SOSVA, Voluntary Action Network of India.

- Norms and processes used overseas were also reviewed (Phillipines, USA).

February 2002

- Discussion of Norms amongst Alliance members, national and Southern region networks.
- Decision was made to widely disseminate Norms within the sector.
- Sub-committees established to set good practices guidelines on Personnel policies, Accounting, Annual Reports and Classification.
- MAHITI requested to develop the website: www.credibilityalliance.org

June 2002

- Sub-committees meet to formulate guidelines.

CONSENSUS BUILDING PROCESS

November 2001 - June 2002

- Individual meetings with over 100 voluntary organisations/ NGOs/ Development organisations.
- 6 consultative meetings held.
- Mass mailing of Norms by Alliance members to 15,000 partners/members/affiliates.
- Preliminary feedback to Norms and process solicited.

July 2002

- National meet at the Tata Institute of Scoial Sciences, Mumbai of 78 organisations/networks to discuss the draft Norms.

- Feedback received from 500 organisations with 94.5% totally agreeing with the concept of minimum Norms.

- Preparing a plan of action to disseminate the Norms to grassroots organisations from September 2002 to August 2003 for their feedback. The objective is to reach out to a regionally and sectorally diverse set of organisations across the voluntary sector. It is estimated that 2,000 organisations will be contacted during this period. The action plan will be translated into reality by four zonal teams, who will work across states in each region. The main strategy will include :

    - To organise 4 zonal workshops in the country
    - To organise a wide range of local workshops as determined by a zonal team for the grassroots organisations in each zone.
    - To translate material into regional languages and disseminate to networks

Based on the feedback received from this process, the Alliance will determine the way ahead.

VALUES

Values inspire and guide the Voluntary Sector and each organisation. These include :

- Self-governing - voluntary organisations are independent of the government.
- Integrity - in all that we do and say.
- Non-profit - working selflessly not to generate profit for ourselves - though profits can be made in some of our activities to support services.
- Volunteers - using and respecting volunteers.

It is these values and more, which are to be preserved by complying with the Norms.

NORMS

NORMS

This section includes the Norms drafted by the Credibility Alliance members. The Norms have been kept to a minimal level to enable the maximum of organisations with a variety of agendas to comply. Later on more comprehensive Norms would also be developed for different categories of voluntary organisations. The scope of these Norms are currently only for registered organisations seeking public funds.

These Norms have been divided into :

Minimum Norms that are the essential criteria for compliance. It is understood that many orgnaisations may not currently comply with all the minimum Norms.

Desirable Norms are ideals, which an organisation can strive towards. These are entirely optional.

NORMS

These Norms are the minimum criteria, an organisation will comply with. They include :

- ❑ Identity
- ❑ Vision, aims, objectives and achievements
- ❑ Governance
- ❑ Operations
- ❑ Accountability and Transparency

IDENTITY

Principle: The organisation should exist and be registered[1].

Existence

- ❑ The organisation has been functioning for a minimum of 1 year from the date of registration.[1]
- ❑ The physical address given by the organisation is verifiable.

Legal Status

- ❑ The organisation is registered as Trust/ Society/ Section 25 Company.
- ❑ Registration documents of the organisation are available on request.

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[1] **It was decided not to include unregistered organisations at this stage.**

VISION, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES, AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Principle: The organisation be able to state what it is aiming to do and that it can also state achievements related to its aim.

Vision/ Purpose/ Objectives/ Mandate/ Mission[2]

- ❑ A vision/ purpose/ mandate/ mission is articulated beyond the registration documents which drives the organisation.

Impact/ Achievement/ Output/ Performance

- ❑ The organisation is able to show performance through defined indicators which it uses to measure its performance against its stated objectives.

Aims and Objectives

- ❑ The organisation has a defined set of aims and objectives.

GOVERNANCE

Principle: The organisation is committed to and practices good governance, specially because voluntary organisations draw upon public funds and private donations.

- ❑ The organisation has a Governing Board, by whatever name called.

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2 Organisations use different terms

- ❑ The organisation discloses name, age, sex, work experience, and position of Board members.
- ❑ Not more than half the Board members have remunerative roles.
- ❑ The Board meets at least twice a year with quorum as stipulated in its own Articles of Association.
- ❑ All remuneration and reimbursements to Board members are to be disclosed.
- ❑ Minutes of Board meetings are documented and circulated.
- ❑ The Board approves programmes, budgets, annual activity reports and audited financial statements.
- ❑ The Board ensures the organisation's compliance with laws and regulations.

OPERATIONS

Principle: The organisation must conduct its programmes and operations efficiently and effectively in the public interest.

Programme

- ❑ Activities to be in line with the vision/ purpose/ objective/ mandate/ mission of the organisation.

Management

- ❑ Appropriate systems must be in place for:
  - ♦ Periodic programme planning/ monitoring/ review
  - ♦ Robust accounting
  - ♦ Consultative decision-making

Human Resources

- ❑ Clear roles and responsibilities for personnel (including volunteers) exist.
- ❑ All personnel are issued a letter of contract/ appointment.
- ❑ Appropriate Personnel Policy is in place.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

Principle: Organisations be accountable and transparent to persons inside and outside the organisation who are interested and involved : This will include the community served and the public donors and volunteers.

Accountability

- ❑ Signed audited statements are available: balance sheet, income and expenditure statement, receipts and payments account, schedules to these, notes on accounts and the statutory auditors' report.
- ❑ Statement of accounts to indicate whether they have been constructed on a cash or accrual basis.

Transparency

- ❑ The organisation's Annual Report will be disseminated/ communicated to the community and others and made available on request every year, within 8 months of the end of the organisation's financial year.

- ❑ Board to have a written policy on purchases, disposable, sale of assets, investments etc. to gain comparative advantage to the organisation, which also ensures transparency.

DESIRABLE NORMS

In addition to the 'minimum' Norms, there are a few 'Desirable Norms' which are optional.

GOVERNANCE

Composition of the Board:

- ❑ At least 2/3 of Board members are unrelated by blood or marriage.
- ❑ A Board Rotation Policy exists and is practiced.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

- ❑ Distribution of staff according to salary levels disclosed in the annual report.

Three frameworks are suggested below. Choose the one you are most comfortable with.

FRAMEWORK 1

Slab of gross salary (in Rs.) plus benefits paid to staff	Male staff	Female staff	Total staff
< 2,500			
< 7,000			
< 14,000			
< 21,000			
< 28,000			

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GOOD PRACTICES

Good Practices are those practices which may or may not be adopted by all organisations. But these practices are "desirable".

This section includes guidelines for 'Good Practices' prepared by Credibility Alliance members, in support of the Norms with respect to :

- ❑ Annual Reports
- ❑ Personnel Policies
- ❑ Accounting Procedures

These guidelines will be continuously updated to include various aspects of the functioning of an organisation. Voluntary organisations will find these guidelines helpful - but must decide for themselves whether they wish to apply to them or not.

ANNUAL REPORTS

All organisations should prepare Annual Reports (appendix-1). The following headings indicate the information to be provided :

Organisational Information

- ❑ Name of organisation, registration date and number (as applicable under various Acts), registered address of the organisation and address for communication if different to the registered address.
- ❑ Names of board members, gender, role in the organisation (President etc). Relationship if any between board members and areas of competency of board members.
- ❑ Number of board meetings held in the year. Number attended (to be indicated in brackets).
- ❑ Names and addresses of auditors.
- ❑ Names of main bankers and legal advisors (if applicable).
- ❑ Numbers of staff (full-time and part-time, male and female ratio, paid and voluntary).
- ❑ Organisational structure or organogram.
- ❑ Networks/ linkages with other organisations.
- ❑ Historical details - origins, brief history, milestones of the organisation.

Programme Information

- ❑ Vision, mission of the organisation.
- ❑ Objectives and descriptions of main activities undertaken during the year including communities served and geographical areas of operation.
- ❑ Review of the progress and results achieved in the year. Provide verifiable indicators (facts and figures) demonstrating achievement at local, state, regional, national and international levels.
- ❑ Information regarding internal or external evaluations/ audits (if any) conducted on programmes and/ or the organisation.
- ❑ Major plans for the future (if any).

Financial Information

- ❑ Complete audited statement of accounts with schedules to be included in annual report; or to be made available on request, or for a fee.
- ❑ If the full statement is not included - include an Abridged Balance Sheet; and Income and Expenditure account. The report should state which basis of accounting has been used (cash or accrual). Information on previous year's accounts to be presented.
- ❑ Annual Report to be made available within eight months of end of the fiscal year - preferably much sooner.

- Percentages to be mentioned next to amounts in financial statements and graphs and charts to facilitate easy understanding of information.
- Main financial achievements/ observations to be shown separately as 'performance highlights'.
- Appeal to be included in the Annual Report to reinforce the point that the organisation is looking for funds; also a statement of thanks to donors; and an invitation to visit the organisation.

Other Information

The following to be disclosed as notes in the Annual Report

Remuneration

- Total amount of remuneration and reimbursements (separately) to board members/ trustees and number of board members who receive remuneration from the organisation.
- Gross remuneration (salary and benefits) of the CEO/ Director and distribution of staff according to salary levels
- Gross remuneration of the three highest paid staff members and the lowest paid member

Travel

- Total cost of national and international air travel (separately) by all personnel (including volunteers).
- Details on international travel, name of traveller, purpose, sponsorship details etc

PERSONNEL POLICIES

All organisations should have a written statement of personnel policies and practices. The policies outlined in this part pertain to recruitment, compensation and benefits, performance management, and general policies.

Recruitment

This ensures a uniform selection process that is unbiased and transparent. It comprises of the following steps:

Personnel Planning:-

- ❑ have an organisation chart showing the present staff position and future requirements
- ❑ assess both short-term and long-term volume of work and plan staff positions accordingly
- ❑ assess the job responsibilities attached to each staff position
- ❑ determine the qualification (education, skills, experience) required for each staff position.
- ❑ accordingly determine the number of staff positions that are vacant.

Inviting Applications:-

- ❑ Display the requirement on notice board.
- ❑ Inform other NGOs through networks.
- ❑ Inform the community through word of mouth.

- ❑ Advertise in newspaper etc. if needed.
- ❑ Clearly mention the number of positions, the required qualification and the salary range in the employment notice.

Selection:-

- ❑ Shortlist the suitable applications based on requirements.
- ❑ Call candidates for interviews, preferably on specific dates and times.
- ❑ Try to interview at least three candidates for each position.
- ❑ Constitute an interview board of at least two members and their assessment should be recorded in writing.
- ❑ As a good practice, make reference checks from the past employer for the selected candidate.
- ❑ Verify copies of certificates confirming a candidates education and other experience against originals and keep a record.

Appointment/ Contract Letter:

- ❑ Ensure that all the permanent, temporary and contractual employees have an appointment letter stating designation/ position, joining date, termination date (in case of contract), salary details, benefits and notice period (in case of employees).

Preferably, job responsibilities should also be mentioned.

- ❑ Issue letters to volunteers stating the assignment, its time period and compensation (if any).
- ❑ Keep a copy of all such letters duly signed by the appointee/ volunteer for office records.

Mode of payment and receipt from staff:

- ❑ Salaries (above Rs. 1000/- p.m.) to be paid through A/c payee cheques.
- ❑ Proper receipt to be issued for all donations received from the employees whether through cash or cheque, and such donations to be reflected in accounts and annual report.
- ❑ All employees to be informed about the confirmed date of payment in each month.
- ❑ Employees to be encouraged to deposit their cheque in their personal bank accounts.

Induction and Orientation:

At the time of joining, each new employee must be oriented to the organisation's mission, objectives, history, activities and policies for a period of three days including a field visit.

- ❑ As part of joining formalities, each employee must submit the following documents: -
  - ♦ Copies of qualification certificates (obtained in the selection process)

- ♦ Photographs
- ♦ Reference letter (if any)

Compensation and Benefits

This is to provide equitable benefits to all employees based on their contribution to the organisation and to ensure that all relevant compensation laws are complied with, e.g. Provident Fund, Minimum Wages, Gratuity etc. The following are also to be considered:

Salary:

- ❑ All employees to receive 'minimum wages' as defined in law, especially when projects are supported by government and other donor agencies, either national or international.

Leave:

- ❑ Leave policy and compensation policy should be available in writing and accessible to all employees.
- ❑ Ensure minimum 15 working days leave for 1 complete year of service, could be a maximum of 45 days.
- ❑ Ensure atleast one day off in each week.
- ❑ Ensure all female employees are entitled to a minimum of 12 weeks maternity leave, applicable also at the time of adoption (for 2 children).
- ❑ Ensure that 6 weeks paternity leave is granted.

Holidays:

- Have a declared list of holidays that should cover state and national holidays. The following are the three national holidays; 26th January (Republic Day), 15th August (Independence Day), 2nd October (Gandhiji's Birthday).
- Holidays other than on the declared list should be based on State Laws (National, Festival Holidays Act).
- The holiday list should be prepared in consultation with the staff and displayed at the beginning of the year.

Compensatory Leave:

- Compensatory leave policy to be in writing. (By and large this should be discouraged.)

Travel Policy:

- Travel practices (food, mode, accomodation) should be as equitable as possible for all staff.
- Invitation to national and international events should be considered an organisational invitation and the person most like to contribute and benefit should be sent to the event.

Miscellaneous:

- The following benefits should be taken into consideration while fixing the salary for each position.

- Basic including D.A.
- Medical
- Provident Fund
- E.S.I.S.

- As part of good practice, personal accident insurance policy should be taken to cover all employees - e.g. Janata Policy that costs Rs. 15/- to Rs. 20/- per year per person.

Performance Management

To ensure professional development of staff members, an organisation should have self management systems in place. This would also enhance employee capacity to meet the organisation's objectives and to ensure feedback to employees on their contribution to the organisation. Towards this, the organisation should :

- Ensure appraisal of all the employees conducted annually and this should be documented.
- Ensure that mutually agreed objectives/ targets are set at the beginning of the year based on which the appraisal will be done.
- Ensure that a user-friendly appraisal format is in place.
- Encourage a 360 degree appraisal system whereby there is a two-way feedback system for the employees as well as employer.

- Conduct performance appraisals jointly with the individual concerned, with feedback being two-way. The conclusion of these discussions should be recorded on the form and should be signed by the Supervisor and the Supervisee.

- Determine individual capacity building needs based on the appraisal and feedback and implement.

- Consider appraisals at the time of deciding increments. Whenever given i.e. increments should partly be linked to performance.

Other Policies

Participative Management

To build ownership for the organisation and its objectives, the organisation should :

- Share regular information through structured and unstructured methods like meetings, notices, bulletins etc.

- Inform employees whom they can take their concerns to, and in what time period they can expect the response.

Exit

To ensure an employee leaves with dignity and to get insights into the organisation from separating employees, the organisation should :

- Have a written termination policy.

- An organisation may terminate the services for various reasons. Whatever the reason the concerned individual should be given 'show-cause' notice in writing and an opportunity to explain or defend their viewpoint.
- The employee desiring to resign, should submit a resignation letter.
- The organisation should ensure that an employee wishing to resign gets adequate opportunity to express his/ her feelings about the organisation.
- The organisation must issue an 'acceptance of resignation' in a timely manner, stating the relieving date after considering the notice period.
- The organisation should ensure that there is timely clearance of dues.
- An 'experience certificate' should be given to the employee.
- The feedback received through exit interview, should be fed into the planning process.

Grievance redressal

- Every organisation should articulate a written grievance procedure.
- Every organisation should articulate a written "sexual harassment" grievance procedure.

ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES[1]

The following accounting and reporting procedures are recommended in addition to the statutory complicances that are required by registered organisations.

Basis of Financial Statements

- An accrual basis of accounting to be followed.

Income Recognition Corpus/ Capital Grants and Donations

- Grants to corpus for general expenses to be recognised as direct increases in assets and liability.
- Endowments for specific purposes to be recognised as direct increases in assets and liability.
- Income from corpus and endowment to be recognised as revenue and assets.
- Donated assets to be treated as deferred income liability and recognised as income over the depreciated period of asset.

Income Recognition - Unrestricted Grants and Donations

- Recognise as revenue and transfer to "General Fund"/ "Reserves" within Trust Funds/ Shareholder's or Society's Funds.

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[1] These guildelines are included as 'recommended'. There are plans to develop these in conjunction with the Indian Institute of Chartered Accountants. They are likely to evolve into two levels of accounting practice; one for small organisations (by far the majority); and one for larger organisations.

Income Recognition - Restricted Grants and Donations

- Recognise as revenue over appropriate period. Grants received in advance for future periods to be treated as liabilities.
- Unutilised amounts at the end of the period to be transferred from Income and Expenditure to "Unutilised Grants" under Liabilities and not to be shown as excess of Income over Expenditure.

Income Recognition - Conditional Grants and Donations

- Mere stipulation of purpose does not amount to condition. "Returnability" required to recognise condition.
- Recognise as liability on receipt, and as income only when "reasonably certain" that the conditions will be met.
- Unutilised/ liability amount to reflect under "Unutilised Grants".

Income Recognition Grants and Donations received by intermediary organisations

An intermediary organisation is said to have variance power, if it has conveyed when and to which organisation it may disburse funds that it has received. If the intermediary acts as a mere passthrough and the donor has specified the organisation to which the intermediary should remit funds, then the intermediary does not have variance power.

- Where there is no variance power, treat as asset and liability, under "Earmarked Funds".
- Where there is variance power, treat as income and expense.

Income Recognition - Promise to Give

- Recognise as applicable only when a legally enforceable right exists, as in a signed MoU.

Income Recognition - Gifts in kind

- Recognise, based on "fair market value", as deferred liability (def.) and reflect in inventory.
- On utilisation recognise as income and expense.
- In case of services, recognise only if it would have been otherwise paid for. Recognise when service is provided.

Income Recognition - Matching Grants or Challenge Grants

- Treat as conditional grants with the matching clause as condition.

REPORTING

Consolidation at Legal Entity Level

- The Balance Sheet, Income and Expenditure Statement and Receipt and Payment statement should be presented in a consolidated form at the level of the Legal Entity and inclusive of FC and non-FC figures.

Receipt and Payment

- Every organisation must present, along with the Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure, Receipt and Payment Statement with their financials.

Reporting format

- Section 25 Companies to report as per Schedule VI of the Companies Act. Trusts and Societies in Gujarat and Maharashtra to report as per Schedules VIII and IX of the Mumbai Public Trust Act. Where no specified reporting format governs the reporting format of an organisation, the enclosed format is to be used. Even in case of Section 25 companies and trusts in Gujarat and Maharashtra, adopting as many of the enclosed formats as possible is encouraged.

Where grants are reported

- Income and Expenditure, and in Balance Sheet under Unutilised Grants, segregated into restricted and conditional, and Deferred Liability/ Capital Grant. Schedules to list sources of grants.

Corpus

- Corpus figures in the balance sheeet must show the opening balance in the Corpus Fund at the beginning of and additions during the year, withdrawals from corpus funds during the year and the closing balance in the fund.

Natural and Functional Heads

- Natural heads reflect expenses under regular business heads, such as salaries, travel, office expenses interest etc. Functional heads on the other hand, reflect expenses classified functionally as programme, administration and fundraising expenses. It is recommended that expenses are placed under functional heads.

Comparatives

- Previous period comparisons to be provided.

Disclosure

- Remuneration to Directors, travel and other reimbursements to Directors should be disclosed separately.- Likewise in case of trustees/ shareholders/members.

Related Party Transactions

- Provisions of AS18 of the Indian Accounting Standards must be applied.
- Disclose gifts/ services support separately.

ABRIDGED BALANCE SHEET AS ON 31ST MARCH ....

Amount in Rs.

Particulars	Sch*	Current Fin Year Amount	Current Fin Year %	Prev. Fin Year Amount	Prev. Fin Year %
Assets					
Fixed assets[1]					
Investments					
Loans disbursed[2]					
Deposits and Advances					
Current assets					
Income and Expenditure A/c Balance[3]					
Total		**0**	**100%**	**0**	**100%**
Liabilities					
Corpus / Endowment fund (s)					
Earmarked Funds					
Loans / Borrowings					
Current liabilities and provisions					
Income and Expenditure A/c Balance[4]					
Total		**0**	**100%**	**0**	**100%**

Notes

* *Column applicable if schedules are provided*

1 *including Furniture and Fixtures*

2 *includes program loans such as credit to communities (does not include staff loans)*

3 *in case of expenditure exceeding income*

4 *in case of income exceeding expenditure*

ABRIDGED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH ....

Amount in Rs.

Particulars	Sch*	Current Fin Year Amount	%	Prev. Fin Year Amount	%
Income					
Self generated income[5]					
Indian sources[6]					
International sources[7]					
Total		**0**	**100%**	**0**	**100%**
Expenditure					
Programme[8]					
Public Education for Fundraising[9]					
Management[10]					
Others					
Total		**0**	**100%**	**0**	**100%**
Deficit / Surplus		**0**		**0**	

Notes

* *Column applicable if schedules are provided*

5 *Self Generated Income includes community contributions, consultancy, fees, net contribution from income generating activies (net of expenses), income from investments and other income including membership fees.*

6 *Indian Sources includes Grants from Government, voluntary grant making agencies, foundations and trusts, grants from corporates, public contributions (including NRIs)*

7 *International Sources include Grants from Multi/ Bi-lateral and Internatinal grant making agencies*

8 *Expenditure towards 'objects'- This includes expenses directly attributable to the program objectives including salaries of project personnel, project related travel etc. Breakups could be given with respect to main program areas*

9 *Increasing organisations are establishing departments for public communication and fund raising. This would include all associated costs like advertisement costs, salaries, printing materials, postage etc*

10 *Central management / administrative expenses*

HEALTH
IBRARY
AND

FEEDBACK FORMS

FEEDBACK FORMS

The Credibility Alliance welcomes your feedback - Please do take the time to complete the forms that are included in this section

FEEDBACK FORM

(To be filled in by all organisations interested in the process.)

ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION

- Full Name : _____
- Address : _____

  _____

  _____

  Pin Code : _____
- Telephone phone : _____
- Email : _____
- Fax : _____
- Date of registration : _____
- Area of operation : _____

  _____
- Income/ Exp. (for 2001 - 2002) : _____
- Total number of staff (professional, others) : _____
- Are you a member of a network: city/ district/ state/ regional/ national/ international level? Please specify the names :

  _____

  _____

FEEDBACK ON CREDIBILITY ALLIANCE (Please circle your answer)

- Do you agree that the Voluntary Sector needs to have minimum Norms: **Yes / No**

  If no, please state reasons : _____

  _____

- Would your organisation be ready to comply with the Norms that have been prepared? **Yes / No**

  If no, please state reasons : _____

  _____

- Would you support the formation of a body (to be evolved from this process) to facilitate refinement and promotion of Norms and Good Practices? **Yes/ No**

  If no, please state reasons :- _____

  _____

- Would your organisation become a member of such a body: **Yes/ No**

- What do you think should be the functions of such a body?
  - ☐ Refinement and promotion of Norms **Yes / No**
  - ☐ Refinement and promotion of Good Practices **Yes / No**
  - ☐ Accreditation of capacity building agencies **Yes / No**
  - ☐ Accrediting of certifying/ rating agencies **Yes / No**
  - ☐ Consensus and membership building **Yes / No**
  - ☐ Information and communication support **Yes / No**
  - ☐ Grievance redressal **Yes / No**
  - ☐ Policy advocacy for and on behalf of the voluntary sector **Yes / No**
  - ☐ Any other _____

- Do you think this body should be of a centralised or decentralised nature? _____

  _____

- In addition to voluntary organisations, who else should be eligible for membership on the structure

  ☐ Donors **Yes / No**
  ☐ Academia **Yes / No**
  ☐ Corporates **Yes / No**
  ☐ Government **Yes / No**
  ☐ Other bodies (eg. FICI) **Yes / No**

- As the structure of this body needs to be self financing over a period of time, would you be willing to contribute a percentage of the revenue of your organisation as annual membership fees: **Yes / No**

  ☐ 0.25% **Yes / No**
  ☐ 0.5% **Yes / No**
  ☐ 1% **Yes / No**
  ☐ Any other _____

- Would your organisation desire to be accredited by this body. **Yes / No**
  – through self regulation
  – by peer review
  – independent accreditised agencies

- Would you be willing to pay for the accredition process by an independent agency? **Yes / No**

  If "yes" how much amount would you be willing to pay

  Rs. _____

- Any other suggestions : _____

Please send this form to your zonal co-ordinators or as intimated by them.

COMMITMENT TO NORMS

I, the undersigned, of _____

_____

organisation, commit our willingness to work towards compliance of the Norms within a period of _____ months.

Signature : _____

Name : _____

Designation : _____

Full address : _____

_____

_____

Tel. No. : _____

Email : _____

Fax : _____

Date : _____

Stamp : _____

Please send this form to your zonal co-ordinators or as intimated by them.

COMMITMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN CREDIBILITY ALLIANCE

I/ We, are keen to participate in the Alliance process.

☐ Please keep me/ us informed of meeting and programme

☐ I/ We are happy to make an initial contribution towards expenses of the Alliance of:

☐ Rs. 100 ☐ Rs. 500 ☐ Rs. 1000 ☐ Rs. 2500 ☐ Rs. 5000
☐ Rs. 10000 ☐ Others - _____

By Cheque/ DD No. _____ dated _____
payable to 'Credibility Alliance'.

Signature : _____

Name : _____

Designation : _____

Full address : _____

_____

_____

Tel. No. : _____

Email : _____

Fax : _____

Date : _____

Stamp : _____

Please send this form to your zonal co-ordinators or as intimated by them.

ORGANISATIONS/ INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED IN DRAFTING THE NORMS[1]

AP Child Rights Advocacy Forum, A F Ferguson and Co., All India Women's Conference, ANUBHAV, Apnalaya, Ashoka: Innovators for the Public, Association of Schools of Social Work, Against Trafficking of Sexually Exploited Children (ATSEC), British High Commission, Centre for Advancement of Philanthrophy, Centre for Health and Social Sector Studies, CHAI - Catholic Hospital Association of India, Charities Aid Foundation, CHILDLINE India Foundation (CIF), Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), Child in Need Institute (CINI ASHA), Common Wealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI), Concern India Foundation, Consumer Rights Education and Awareness Trust (CREAT), Confederation of Voluntary Associations (COVA), Christian Medical Association of India (CMAI), Credit Rating Information Services of India Ltd. (CRISIL), Child Relief and You (CRY), Donor Action Network (DAN), Development Alternatives (DA), Don Bosco Provincial House, Development Support Initiative (DSI), Department for International Development (DFID), Financial Management Service Foundation, Federation of Indian NGOs working for Drug Abuse Prevention (FINGODAP), Foundation for Humanization, GIVE Foundation, Helpage India, Hunger Project, India Collective for Micro Finance (ICMF), Indian Committee of Youth Organisations (ICYO), Indo Dutch Project Management Society (IDPMS), Indian NGOs.com, NAZ Foundation (India) Trust, Indian Network on Participatory Irrigation Management, KRITI (A Development Praxis and Communication Team), Mahiti.org, Manav Vikas Kendra, Murray Culshaw Advisory Services (MCAS), Micro Credit Ratings International Limited (MCRIL), Mobility India, National Association for the Blind, India, Network Against Child Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking (NACSET), National Alliance for the Fundamental Right to Education (NAFRE), Nagarika Seva Trust, National Trust For Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disability, Sampradan-Indian Centre for Philanthropy, Save the Children UK, Save the Children India, SRSHTI, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, Salaam Balak Trust, Society for Child Development, Chaitanya, National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD), Nirmala Niketan College of Social Work, People's Vigilance Committee on Human Rights, Plan International, Pratham, Prayas, Railway Children, Rashtriya Karigar Panchayat, Satpuda Foundation, Shrishti, Society for Service to Voluntary Agencies (SOSVA), Stop Trafficking, Oppression and Prostitution (STOP), Stree Mukti Sangatana, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), USAID, United Nation International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Voluntary Action Network India (VANI), Women's Coalition for Peace and Development, Don Bosco National Forum - Youth at Risk, Rambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini, Thane, Lok Jagruti Mandal, Resource and Support Centre for Development, Sanskruti Samvardhan Mandal.

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[1] These organisations have attended meeting upto July 2002 - many others have also contributed ideas and opinions.

CREDIBILITY ALLIANCE - CONTACTS

Credibility Alliance is an informal network in which all members play an important role. For purposes of decentralization, Zonal teams have been appointed and a general facilitation Office established for enquiries, correspondence and accounting.

- From August 2001 to November 2002 the Office was C/o CHILDLINE India Foundation in Mumbai (initiated process and appointed at the national workshop)
- For the next phase December 2002 to September 2003 the Office is C/o VANI in Delhi (appointed by Core Committee)

CINI ASHA has been entrusted the responsibility of coordinating the national workshop to be held in Calcutta between March and June 2003 (date not yet finalized)

PHASE I: CHILDLINE INDIA FOUNDATION

Nana Chowk Municipal School, 2nd Floor,
Frere Bridge, Low Level, Nana Chowk,
Near Grant Road Station, Mumbai - 400 007.
Phone: 011-2388 1098, 2387 1098, 2384 1098
Fax : 2381 1098 • Email: dial1098@childlineindia.org.in

PHASE II: VOLUNTARY ACTION NETWORK INDIA

457 3rd Floor, Chirag Delhi, New Delhi 110 017
Phone: 011-26443260, 26443261, 26215268
Fax: 011-26681678
Email enquiries to info@credibilityalliance.org

PARTNERS OF CREDIBILITY ALLIANCE IN PHASE I

17 DECEMBER 2001

A meeting was held at the India Habitat Centre, New Delh The objective of this meeting was to discuss the need for a NGO consultative framework. It was coordinated by CIF and CA A working group was constituted at this meeting.

8 AND 9 JANUARY 2002

A second meeting was organised in New Delhi to evolve a set of basic standards, subsequently referred to as Norms, fo enhancing the credibility of the voluntary sector. Participants were members of the core group. The meeting was coordinated by CRY, DAN, MAHITI, MCAS.

26 FEBRUARY 2002

A large number of organizations met in Bangalore to build consensus for the first draft of minimum Norms through discussions and modifications, establish guidelines for the consensus building processes including the formation of sub-committees. A plan of action was also discussed for funding for the next phase of the project beginning April 2002. A possible structure for the alliance was also discussed. The logistics of the meeting were handled by CRY, DSI, MAHITI and MCAS.

GOOD PRACTICES

The **Good Practices** recommended in the booklet are a result of the deliberations by the following subcommittees:

Personnel Policies - CRY (anchor), CINI ASHA, CHRI
Accounting Standards - GIVE (anchor), MAHITI, NAFRE
Annual Reports - SOSVA (anchor), MCAS, VANI, Mobility India, A.F. Fergusson
Classification - MCAS (anchor), Indian NGOs.com, DA, PRIA
Organization review and provision of salient information - DA (anchor), MCRIL, CIF, CHAI, CRISIL

27 FEBRUARY 2002

As a continuation of the process of broad basing the dialogue, a one-day meeting was held in Bangalore with DAN and the Southern region networks including FEVORD K.

13 JUNE 2002

In a workshop in New Delhi organised by CIF and ASHOKA a presentation by the anchors of the sub-committee was followed by a discussion on the proposed Norms.

14 JUNE 2002

A Creditibility Alliance donor meeting was organised at the India Habitat Centre in New Delhi. It was coordinated by the donors Save the Children Fund U.K., UNICEF, BHC, Plan International.

4 & 5 JULY 2002

A national meet was held at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in which 78 organisations/ networks met to discuss the Draft Norms. This meet was coordinated by TISS, GIVE, SOSVA, India Cares, CIF. A plan of action was prepared to disseminate the Norms to grassroots organisations.

Independent Consultants: Meenu, Anu

Assistant: Indrani

General Facilitation Office:

CHILDLINE INDIA FOUNDATION
Nana Chowk Municipal School, 2nd Floor,
Frere Bridge, Low Level, Nana Chowk,
Near Grant Road Station, Mumbai - 400 007.
Phone: 011-2388 1098, 2387 1098, 2384 1098
Fax : 2381 1098 • Email: dial1098@childlineindia.org.in

PARTNERS OF CREDIBILITY ALLIANCE IN PHASE II

Zonal Coordination Teams

North Zone: Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Uttaranchal Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir

Team members: VANI, CAF, DA, PRAYAS, KRITI
Contact: Credibility Alliance - North Zone
C/o CAF, 25 Navjeevan Vihar, New Delhi 110 017
Phone: 011 -2669 2206, 2669 2919 • Email: cafindia@vsnl.com

South Zone: Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala

Team members: FEVORD-K, Nagrika Seva Trust
COVA, Mahiti, MCAS
Contact: Credibility Alliance - South Zone
C/o FEVORD-K, Grace Villa, No. 514, 5th Cross, 7th Main
HMT Layout, R.T. Nagar, Bangalore 560 032
Phone: 080 -353 5532 • Email: nst@vsnl.com

North East Zone: Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland, Manipur

Team members: Centre for Development Action
and Appropriate Technology (CADAT), ATSEC,
Contact: Credibility Alliance - North East Zone
C/o CADAT, Swapta Swahid Path, Sorumataria,
G. S. Road, Guwahati 781 006
Phone: 0361 -2222 8243, 2245 0939
Email: cadat@rediffmail.com

East Zone: West Bengal, Orissa, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chattisgarh

Team members: CINI ASHA, CLPOA, Gram Seva, Rashtriya Gramin Vikas Nigam (RGVN)
Contact: Credibility Alliance - East Zone
C/o CINI ASHA, 63 Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road
Kolkata 760 016
Phone: 033 -2245 2705 • Email: ciniasha@vsnl.com

West Zone: Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Goa, Madhya Pradesh

Team members: SOSVA, TISS, Give Foundation,
CIF, Resource and Support Centre for Development
Contact: Credibility Alliance - West Zone
C/o SOSVA, Room No 5/6/7
1st Floor, Bhimabai Rane Municipal School
RR Roy Marg, Mumbai 400 004
Phone: 022 -2367 3262 • Email: sosva@hotmail.com

The website is being developed and maintained by Mahiti in Bangalore: Email: sunil@mahiti.org

At any time for information on the work and plans of the Alliance kindly refer to www.credibilityalliance.org

General Facilitation Office:

VOLUNTARY ACTION NETWORK INDIA

457 3rd Floor, Chirag Delhi, New Delhi 110 017
Phone: 011-6443260, 6443261, 6215268
Fax: 011-6681678
Email enquiries to info@credibilityalliance.org

We look forward to hearing from you

CORRECTIONS IN THIS BOOK

1. Page No. 20 - Norms of Drafting Process January 2002.
   Voluntary Action Network India

2. Page No. 40 - Compensation and Benefits
   Ensure that 6 weeks paternity (for 2 children) leave is granted

3. Page No. 57, Feedback Forms
   In addition to voluntary organisations, who else should be eligible for membership on the structure
   Other bodies ***(e.g. FICCI)***

4. Page No. 65 - Phase I : CHILDLINE INDIA FOUNDATION
   Phone : 022-2388 1098, 2387 1098, 2384 1098

5. Page No. 67
   Phone : 022-2388 1098, 2387 1098, 2384 1098

6. Page No. 69 - General Facilitation Office : Voluntary Action Network India
   Phone : 011-26443260, 26443261, 26215268, Fax : 011-26681678

Please visit the Credibility Alliance web-site for further information and latest updates at

www.credibilityalliance.org

E-mail : info@credibilityalliance.org